

## ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus for disabling a data interface between network element data processing units is described. In one embodiment, the method includes transmitting data frames over a data connection through an interface of a first network element data processing unit to a second network element data processing unit, disabling the interface, receiving an interface disable signal, completing transmission of data frames currently being transmitted, upon receiving an interface disable signal, disabling the interface, the disabling not causing data loss, receiving acknowledgements over the data connection, and enabling the data connection after receiving a number of acknowledgements.